

# TORNADOES



*Tornado damage*

## Tornado Watches and Warnings

A **tornado watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms. This is time to remind family members where the safest places are located within your home. Listen to the radio or watch television for further developments.

A **tornado warning** is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar.

## Mobile Homes

Mobile homes are particularly vulnerable. A mobile home can overturn very easily even if precautions have been taken to tie down the unit. When a tornado warning is issued, take shelter in a building with a strong foundation. If shelter is not available, lie in a ditch or low-lying area a safe distance away from the unit.

## Learn these tornado danger signs:

### Tornado danger signs:

- An approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible.
- Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still.
- Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.

### If you see a tornado, what should you do?

- Go at once to the basement, storm cellar or the lowest level of the building.
- If there is no basement, go to an inner hallway or a smaller inner room without windows, such as a bathroom or closet.
- Get away from the windows.
- Go to the center of the room. Stay away

from corners because they tend to attract debris.

- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.
- Use arms to protect head and neck
- If in a mobile home, get out and find shelter elsewhere.

### If at work or school:

- Go to the basement or to an inside hallway at the lowest level.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways or shopping malls.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.
- Use arms to protect head and neck.

### If outdoors:

- If possible, get inside a building.
- If shelter is not available or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building. Be aware of the potential for flooding.
- Use arms to protect head and neck.

### If in a vehicle:

- Never try to outdrive a tornado in a car or truck. Tornadoes can change direction quickly and can lift up a car or truck and toss it through the air.
- Get out of the car immediately and take shelter in a nearby building.
- If there is no time to get indoors, get out of the car and lie in a ditch or low-lying area away from the vehicle. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

# SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS

## If threatened by a thunderstorm, what should you do?

### If indoors:

- Secure outdoor objects such as lawn furniture that could blow away or cause damage or injury. Take light objects inside.
- Shutter windows securely and brace outside doors.
- Listen to a battery operated radio for the latest storm information.
- Do not handle any electrical equipment or telephones because lightning could follow the wire. Television sets are particularly dangerous at this time.
- Avoid bathtubs, water faucets and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity.

### If outdoors:

- Attempt to get into a building or vehicle.

- If no structure is available, get to an open space and squat low to the ground as quickly as possible. (If in the woods, find an area protected by a low clump of trees--never stand underneath a single large tree in the open.) Be aware of the potential for flooding in low-lying areas.
- Crouch with hands on knees.
- Avoid tall structures such as towers, tall trees, fences, telephone lines or power lines.
- Stay away from natural lightning rods such as golf clubs, tractors, fishing rods, bicycles or camping equipment.
- Stay away from rivers, lakes or other bodies of water.
- If you are isolated in a level field or prairie and you feel your hair stand on end (which

indicates that lightning is about to strike), bend forward, putting your hands on your knees. A position with feet together and crouching while removing all metal objects is recommended. Do not lie flat on the ground.

### If in a vehicle:

- Pull safely onto the shoulder of the road away from any trees that could fall on the vehicle.
- Stay in the car and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rains subside.
- \* Avoid flooded roadways.